

Application Serial No. 10/736,518
Reply to Office Action dated March 14, 2006

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (original) A dishwasher comprising:

a tub defining a washing chamber, said tub including at least top and opposing side walls;

a partition wall extending downward from the top wall at a position between the opposing side walls and at least partially dividing the washing chamber into first and second wash zones;

a controller for selectively performing a washing operation in either or both of the first and second wash zones;

a door assembly, spanning each of the first and second wash zones, mounted for movement relative to the tub in order to selectively seal the washing chamber, said door assembly including an inner panel formed with first and second outer guide tracks and an intermediate guide track; and

a dish support rack system provided within the washing chamber, said dish support rack system including:

at least one upper dish rack system supported for movement into and out of the tub, said at least one upper dish rack system including first and second upper dish racks movably supported between the partition wall and a respective one of the opposing side walls, said first upper dish rack having a first width and said second upper dish rack having a second width, with the first width being at least double the second width; and

at least one lower dish rack system supported for movement into and out of the tub, said at least one lower dish rack system including first and second lower dish racks movably supported between recessed positions, wherein the first and second lower dish racks are arranged within the washing chamber, and extended positions, wherein the

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first and second lower dish racks are supported upon the intermediate guide track and a respective one of the first and second outer guide tracks.

2. (currently amended) A dishwasher comprising:

a tub defining a washing chamber, said tub including at least top and opposing side walls;

a partition wall extending downward from the top wall at a position between the opposing side walls and at least partially dividing the washing chamber into first and second wash zones;

first and second upper dish racks movably supported between the partition wall and a respective one of the opposing side walls, said first dish rack having a first width and said second dish rack having a second width, with the first width being at least double the second width; and

at least one lower dish rack supported for movement into and out of the tub.

3. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 2, wherein the first width is approximately 20-inches (50.8-cm) and the second width is approximately 7-inches (17.78-cm).

4. (currently amended) The dishwasher according to claim 2, wherein the at least one lower dish rack includes third and fourth lower dish racks, said third dish rack being mounted below the first dish rack and having ~~the~~ a third width which is substantially equal to the first width, said fourth dish rack being positioned below the second dish rack and substantially in a common plane with the third dish rack, said fourth dish rack having ~~a~~ fourth width which is substantially equal to the second width.

5. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 4, wherein the first, second, third and fourth dish racks are independently slidable relative to the tub.

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6. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 4, further comprising: a first plurality of wash arms adapted to direct a pressurized flow of wash fluid to the first and third dish racks.

7. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 6, wherein the first plurality of wash arms are constituted by rotating spray arms.

8. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 7, further comprising: a second plurality of wash arms, said second plurality of wash arms being adapted to direct a pressurized flow of wash water onto the second and fourth dish racks.

9. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 8, wherein the second plurality of wash arms are constituted by rotating wands.

10. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 4, further comprising: first and second wash zones, said first and third dish racks being located in the first wash zone and said second and fourth dish racks being located in the second wash zone, said first and second wash zones being at least defined by the partition.

11. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 10, further comprising: a control system adapted to selectively perform a washing operation in the first wash zone, the second wash zone, or both of the first and second wash zones.

12. (original) A dishwasher comprising:

- a tub defining a washing chamber, said tub including at least top, rear and opposing side walls;

- a door assembly mounted for movement relative to the tub in order to selectively seal the washing chamber, said door assembly including an inner panel formed with first and second outer guide tracks and a first intermediate guide track;

- at least one upper dish rack supported for movement into and out of the tub; and

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first and second lower dish racks movably supported between recessed positions, wherein the first and second lower dish racks are arranged within the washing chamber, and extended positions, wherein the first and second lower dish racks are supported upon the intermediate guide track and a respective one of the first and second outer guide tracks.

13. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 12, wherein said first lower dish rack has a first width and said second lower dish rack has a second width, with said second width being smaller than the first width.

14. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 13, wherein the first width is approximately 20-inches (50.8-cm) and the second width is approximately 7-inches (17.78-cm).

15. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 12, further comprising: a second intermediate guide track extending from the rear wall of the tub towards said door assembly, said second intermediate guide track being aligned with the first intermediate guide track.

16. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 12, further comprising: a partition wall dividing the washing chamber into first and second wash zones, wherein the first lower dish rack is arranged in the first wash zone and the second lower dish rack is arranged in said second wash zone.

17. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 16, further comprising: a control system adapted to selectively perform a washing operation in either or both of the first and second wash zones.

18. (original) A dishwasher comprising:

a tub defining a washing chamber, said tub including at least top and opposing side walls;

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a partition wall extending downward from the top wall of the tub at a position between the opposing side walls and at least partially dividing the washing chamber into first and second wash zones;

a door assembly mounted for movement relative to the tub in order to selectively seal the washing chamber, said door assembly spanning each of the first and second wash zones; and

a controller for selectively performing a washing operation in either or both of the first and second wash zones.

19. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 18, further comprising: first and second dish racks slidably supported between the opposing side walls of the tub and the partition wall, said first dish rack having a first width and said second dish rack having a second width, with said second width being smaller than the first width.

20. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 19, further comprising: third and fourth dish racks, slidably supported between the opposing side walls of the tub and an intermediate guide track, said third dish rack having a third width and said fourth dish rack having a fourth width, with said fourth width being smaller than the third width.

21. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 20, wherein the first and second dish racks are mounted above the third and fourth dish racks.

22. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 19, wherein the first width is approximately 20-inches (50.8-cm) and the second width is approximately 7-inches (17.78-cm).

23. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 19, wherein the first wash zone is defined by the first and third dish racks, and the second wash zone is defined by the second and fourth dish racks.

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24. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 22, further comprising: a first plurality of wash arms, said first plurality of wash arms being adapted to direct a pressurized flow of wash water into the first wash zone.

25. (original) The dishwasher according to claim 24, further comprising: a second plurality of wash arms, said second plurality of wash arms being adapted to direct a pressurized flow of wash water into the second wash zone.

26. (original) The dishwashing apparatus according to claim 24, further comprising: a control system for establishing an operational mode of the dishwasher, wherein said control system is adapted to selectively operate the first and second plurality of wash arms independently from one another.

27. (original) A method of performing a washing operation in a dishwasher including a washing chamber having a partition at least partially dividing the washing chamber into first and second wash zones comprising:

loading dishware into dish racks located in at least one of the first and second wash zones;

closing a door of the dishwasher to seal both of the first and second washing zones with each of the dish racks in the washing chamber; and

initiating the washing operation selectively in the first wash zone, the second wash zone, or both the first and the second wash zones.